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OCDCENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

CD NO.

COUNTRY Iran

DATE DISTR. 21 September 1951

SUBJECT Catalytic Cracking Plant
in Abadan

NO. OF PAGES 1

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PLACE
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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. The normal daily output of the relatively newly constructed catalytic cracking plant constructed by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company at Abadan is 15,000 barrels (approximately 2,130,000 liters) of motor car gasoline of a quality containing 75 to 80 percent octane.
2. This 75 to 80 percent octane gasoline product is produced by the catalytic cracking plant from a substance known as "waxy distillate." It is estimated that from 45 to 50 percent of the waxy distillate is convertible into 75 to 80 percent octane gasoline in the cracking process.
3. The waxy distillate from which gasoline is derived is obtained as follows:
 - a. Crude oil as received from the field is first distilled under ordinary air pressure, the extracts from this process being benzine, kerosene, and gas oil.
 - b. A black-colored residue left over in the process called "mazout" is again distilled in a vacuum. This process produces a heavy gas oil, asphalt, and waxy distillate.
4. About 50 percent of the volume of the waxy distillate so produced (a product intrinsically of little value) is converted into 75 to 80 percent octane automobile gasoline. The 50 percent of the total volume left as by-product is usable as lower grade fuel.
5. The difference between automobile gasoline produced by the catalytic cracking plant and that produced by the other refining installations at Abadan is that the product of the catalytic cracking plant is of higher octane.
6. Normally there are thirty foreign and fifteen Iranian technicians operating the catalytic cracking plant. It would not be possible to operate this unit with only Iranian technicians unless Iranian technicians were better trained and qualified than is now the case. As happened during the April strike, the catalytic cracking plant can, however, be operated temporarily by thirty adequately trained foreign technicians familiar with the operation of this unit, without the assistance of the fifteen Iranian technicians employed at the plant.

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An important product essential to the operation of the catalytic cracking plant is a substance known as "the catalyzer." To date the catalyzer has been obtained from the United States. When the plant is operating at full capacity, approximately ten tons of catalyzer are needed daily. After being used once, the efficiency of the catalyzer is reduced from 40 to 60 percent. Without the catalyzer the catalytic cracking plant will not operate. Once the catalytic cracking plant has been closed down, from 40 to 60 days minimum are required to bring the plant into operation again.

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